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Message Text

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12/43
ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 AID-05 PC-01 SAM-01 IO-10 SSO-00

NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 /074 W
---------- 060848
O R 251125Z JAN 75
FM AMEMBASSY TANANARIVE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6873
INFO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
AMEBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY PORT LOUIS
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON ENG
COMIDEASTFOR
CINCLANT NORFOLK VA

C O N F I D E N T I A L TANANARIVE 0145

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (CORRECTION TEXT - PARAGRAPH 2 C AND F)

CINCUSNAVEUR FOR POLAD; CINCLANT FOR POLAD

DEPT PASS DIA

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS:K PINT MA
SUBJECT: CHANGE OF MALAGASY CABINET

REF: TANANARIVE 0144

1. GENERAL RAMANANTSOA, HEAD OF GOVERNMENT, CRITICIZED FOR INACTION DURING CURRENT POLITICAL CRISIS AND FACED WITH INCREASING PUBLIC DEMANDS FOR CHANGES WITHIN GOVERNMENT, HAS GIVEN HIMSELF FREER HAND TO DEAL WITH SITUATION BY DISSOLVING CABINET. THIS REPRESENTS FIRST CHANGE WHATSOEVER IN
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MINISTERIAL LINE-UP ESTABLISHED AFTER MAY 1972 REVOLUTION.

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2. WE WOULD SPECULATE AS OF NOW THAT:

A. NEW CABINET LIKELY BE SOMEWHAT LARGER THAN EXISTING ONE OF 10 MINISTERS, PLUS RAMANANTSOA.

B. PRESENT ETHNIC BREAKDOWN OF 6 COTIER MINISTERS, 1 BETSILEO, AND 4 MERINA (INCLUDING RAMANANTSOA) NOT LIKELY BE ALTERED IN COTIERS' DISFAVOR. IF ANYTHING, COTIER PROPORTION MAY WELL INCREASE IN EFFORT KEEP DOWN RECRIMINATIONS FROM COASTAL TRIBES.

C. DIFFICULT QUESTION FOR RAMANANTSOA HOWEVER WILL BE IN WHAT FORM TO PROVIDE INCREASED COTIER REPRESENTATION. SHOULD HE BRING IN REPRESENTATIVE SUCH AS ANDRE RESAMPA FROM MALAGASY SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY (PSM) OF EX-PRESIDENT TSIRANANA? IF SO, WOULD HE THEN HAVE TO PROVIDE FOR REPRESENTATION FROM OTHER PRINCIPAL POLITICAL PARTIES SUCH AS PRO-SOVIET AKFM AND PRO-CHINESE MONIMA? THIS WOULD BE HARD PILL FOR RAMANANTSOA AND OTHER MILITARY TO SWALLOW IN VIEW OF THEIR ANTI-POLITICAL PARTY POSITION.

D. OTHER POSSIBILITY MIGHT BE TO SEEK INCREASED COTIER REPRESENTATION FROM AMONG COTIER OFFICERS IN ARMED FORCES. BUT CHOICES AVAILABLE ARE NARROW. HIGHEST-RANKING COTIER OFFICER IS BELIEVED TO BE COLONEL BRECHARD RAJAONARISON WHO, AS REPORTED REFTEL, HAS TAKEN REFUGE AT HEADQUARTERS OF GROUPE MOBILE DE LA POLICE FOLLOWING ABORTED COUP OF DEC 31. DEPUTY CHIEF OF STAFF OF ARMED FORCES TOLD DATT JAN 25 IN RESPONSE TO QUESTION THAT HE HOPED GOVERNMENT RESHUFFLE WOULD PROVIDE SOLUTION FOR RAJAONARISON ISSUE. ALMOST CERTAINLY, THERE WILL BE NO PUNISHMENT FOR HIM AND COHORTS. IT IS PROBABLY NOT EVEN PRECLUDED THAT HE OR COTIER OFFICERS WHO WERE CLOSE TO TSIRANANA MIGHT ENTER CABINET IN LIEU OF DIRECT PSM REPRESENTATION.

E. MILITARY OFFICERS NOW IN CABINET - FOREIGN MINISTER COMMANDER RATSIRAKA, MINISTER INTERIOR COLONEL RATSIMANDRASA, MINISTER TERRITORIAL DEVELOPMENT GENERAL ANDRIAMAHAZO, AND MINISTER INFORMATION LIEUTENANT COLONEL RAKOTOMALALA - LIKELY STAY, THOUGH PORTFOLIOS OF SOME MIGHT CHANGE. RATSIMANDRASA IS HOTTEST INTERNAL POLITICAL POTATO IN THIS GROUP FOR RAMANANTSOA.
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RATSIMANDRASA'S ACTAVONIST, COLONEL RATETAFIKA, PRESUMABLY REMAINS AS DIRECTOR GENERAL OF GOVERNMENT BECAUSE HIS POSITION IS NOT MINISTERIAL, EVEN THOUGH HIS POWER AND AUTHORITY EXCEEDS THAT OF MOST MINISTERS. WHILE WE ARE INCLINED BELIEVE RATSIMANDRASA WILL NOT BE SHIFTED FROM INTERIOR PORTFOLIO BECAUSE OF REPERCUSSIONS THIS MIGHT ENGENDER IN GENDARMERIE WHICH HE COMMANDS, HE COULD BE PUT IN CHARGE OF NEW MINISTRY DEALING WITH FOKONOLONA (NEW VILLAGE ORGANIZATION), AND PRESTI-

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GIOUS FIGURE LIKE ANDRIAMAHAZO NAMED TO INTERIOR.

F. AS FORESHADOWED IN TANANARIVE'S 0128, MINISTER ECONOMY AND FINANCE RAMAROSON (CIVILIAN MERINA TECHNICIAN) WILL VIRTUALLY CERTAINLY BE REPLACED. MINISTRY MAY WELL BE SPLIT INTO ECONOMY AND FINANCE.

3. IMPLICATIONS FOR US: OUR BEST GUESS IS THAT RATSIRAKA WILL REMAIN AS FOREIGN MINISTER, AND MADAGASCAR WILL CONTINUE FOLLOW RADICAL NON-ALIGNED POSITION IN INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS. WE WOULD ALSO EXPECT ANDRIAMAHAZO, WHO HAS BEEN VERY USEFUL FRIEND OF US TO REMAIN INFLUENTIAL MINISTER, THOUGH IT COULD BE MORE DIFFICULT TO GET HIM TO INTERVENE IN OUR BEHALF IF MATTERS WERE OUTSIDE HIS MINISTRY. CONCEIVABLY ECONOMIC POLICY OF REORGANIZED GOVERNMENT MAY BE LESS GOVERNMENT INTERVENTIONIST AND MORE FAVORABLY DISPOSED TOWARD PRIVATE INVESTMENT, DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN, IN ORDER TO GET ECONOMY MOVING AND ENDOURAGE WESTERN DONORS TO FURNISH MORE AID THAN NOW.

4. FOR DIA: DATT HAS BEEN FULLY COLLABORATING WITH EMBASSY IN GATHERING INFORMATION AND PREPARATION OF ALL MESSAGES ON CURRENT POLITICAL CRISIS. HIS AND EMBASSY ASSESSMENTS HAVE BEEN AND CONTINUE TO BE COMPLETELY CONSONANT WITH EACH OTHER.
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